

## Changes in relative payments for physician services

**ISSUE:** Does Medicare have an appropriate process for valuing physician services? This issue is relevant to MedPAC's ongoing work on Medicare's payments for physician services.

**KEY POINTS:** To address this issue, two speakers will present preliminary analyses of changes in payments for physician services from 1992 to 2002. Their analyses address:

- the process for reviewing and revising relative value units in the physician fee schedule,
- the proportion of services affected by the process,
- payment impacts by type of service,
- impacts on relative payments among services from 1992 to 2002, including changes in relative values for physician work and practice expense and changes in the volume of services.

The speakers are from the Health Policy Center at The Urban Institute:

Robert Berenson, M.D., F.A.C.P., Senior Fellow

Stephen Zuckerman, Ph.D., Principal Research Associate

**ACTION:** In response to the panel, Commissioners should provide direction to staff on further work concerning physician payment issues.

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